II Chronicles
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II Chronicles

Chapter 1

a With vv. 3–13, cf. 1 Kings 3.4–15; with vv. 14–17, cf. 1 Kings 10.26–29. Solomon son of David took firm hold of his kingdom, for the L ORD his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.
Solomon summoned all Israel—the officers of thousands and of hundreds, and the judges, and all the chiefs of all Israel, the heads of the clans.
Then Solomon, and all the assemblage with him, went to the shrine at Gibeon, for the Tent of Meeting, which Moses the servant of the L ORD had made in the wilderness, was there.
(But the Ark of God David had brought up from Kiriath-jearim to the place which David had prepared for it; for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.)
The bronze altar, which Bezalel son of Uri son of Hur had made, was also there before the Tabernacle of the L ORD, and Solomon and the assemblage resorted to it.
There Solomon ascended the bronze altar before the L ORD, which was at the Tent of Meeting, and on it sacrificed a thousand burnt offerings.
That night, God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask, what shall I grant you?”
Solomon said to God, “You dealt most graciously with my father David, and now You have made me king in his stead.
Now, O L ORD God, let Your promise to my father David be fulfilled; for You have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth.
Grant me then the wisdom and the knowledge b Lit. “that I may go out before this people and come in.” to lead this people, -b for who can govern Your great people?”
God said to Solomon, “Because you want this, and have not asked for wealth, property, and glory, nor have you asked for the life of your enemy, or long life for yourself, but you have asked for the wisdom and the knowledge to be able to govern My people over whom I have made you king,
wisdom and knowledge are granted to you, and I grant you also wealth, property, and glory, the like of which no king before you has had, nor shall any after you have.”
From the shrine at Gibeon, from the Tent of Meeting, Solomon went to Jerusalem and reigned over Israel.
Solomon assembled chariots and horsemen; he had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses that he stationed in the chariot towns and with the king in Jerusalem.
The king made silver and gold as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as the sycamores in the Shephelah.
Solomon’s horses were imported from Egypt and from Que; the king’s traders would buy them from Que at the market price.
A chariot imported from Egypt cost 600 shekels of silver, and a horse 150. These in turn were exported by them c That is, Solomon’s dealers. to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Arameans.

Then Solomon resolved to build a House for the name of the L ORD and a royal palace for himself.

Chapter 2

a Cf. 1 Kings 5. Solomon mustered 70,000 basket carriers and 80,000 quarriers in the hills, with 3,600 men supervising them.
Solomon sent this message to King Huram of Tyre, “In view of what you did for my father David in sending him cedars to build a palace for his residence—
see, I intend to build a House for the name of the L ORD my God; I will dedicate it to Him for making incense offering of sweet spices in His honor, for the regular rows of bread, and for the morning and evening burnt offerings on sabbaths, new moons, and festivals, as is Israel’s eternal duty.
The House that I intend to build will be great, inasmuch as our God is greater than all gods.
Who indeed is capable of building a House for Him! Even the heavens to their uttermost reaches cannot contain Him, and who am I that I should build Him a House—except as a place for making burnt offerings to Him?
Now send me a craftsman to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue yarn, and who knows how to engrave, alongside the craftsmen I have here in Judah and in Jerusalem, whom my father David provided.
Send me cedars, cypress, and algum wood from the Lebanon, for I know that your servants are skilled at cutting the trees of Lebanon. My servants will work with yours
to provide me with a great stock of timber; for the House that I intend to build will be singularly great.
I have allocated for your servants, the wood-cutters who fell the trees, 20,000 kor of crushed wheat and 20,000 kor of barley, 20,000 bath of wine and 20,000 bath of oil.”
Huram, king of Tyre, sent Solomon this written message in reply, “Because the L ORD loved His people, He made you king over them.”
Huram continued, “Blessed is the L ORD, God of Israel, who made the heavens and the earth, who gave King David a wise son, endowed with intelligence and understanding, to build a House for the L ORD and a royal palace for himself.
Now I am sending you a skillful and intelligent man, my master b Lit. “my father.” Huram,
the son of a Danite woman, his father a Tyrian. He is skilled at working in gold, silver, bronze, iron, precious stones, and wood; in purple, blue, and crimson yarn and in fine linen; and at engraving and designing whatever will be required of him, alongside your craftsmen and the craftsmen of my lord, your father David.
As to the wheat, barley, oil, and wine which my lord mentioned, let him send them to his servants.
We undertake to cut down as many trees of Lebanon as you need, and deliver them to you as rafts by sea to Jaffa; you will transport them to Jerusalem.”
Solomon took a census of all the aliens who were in the land of Israel, besides the census taken by his father David, and they were found to be 153,600.
He made 70,000 of them basket carriers, and 80,000 of them quarriers, with 3,600 supervisors to see that the people worked.

Chapter 3

a With vv. 2–17, cf. 1 Kings 6; 7.1–22. Then Solomon began to build the House of the L ORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where [the L ORD] had

appeared to his father David, at the place which David had designated, at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.
He began to build on the second day of the second month of the fourth year of his reign.
These were the dimensions Solomon established for building the House of God: its length in cubits, by the former measure, was 60, and its breadth was 20.
The length of the porch in front [was equal] to the breadth of the House—20 cubits, and its height was 120. Inside he overlaid it with pure gold.
The House itself he paneled with cypress wood. He overlaid it with fine gold and embossed on it palms and chains.
He studded the House with precious stones for decoration; the gold was from Parvaim.
He overlaid the House with gold—the beams, the thresholds, its walls and doors; he carved cherubim on the walls.
He made the Holy of Holies: its length was [equal to] the breadth of the house—20 cubits, and its breadth was 20 cubits. He overlaid it with 600 talents of fine gold.
The weight of the nails was 50 shekels of gold; the upper chambers he overlaid with gold.
He made two sculptured cherubim in the Holy of Holies, and they were overlaid with gold.
The outspread wings of the cherubim were 20 cubits across: one wing 5 cubits long touching one wall of the House, and the other wing 5 cubits long touching the wing of the other cherub;
one wing of the other [cherub] 5 cubits long extending to the other wall of the House, and its other wing 5 cubits long touching the wing of the first cherub.
The wingspread of these cherubim was thus 20 cubits across, and they were standing up facing the House.
He made the curtain of blue, purple, and crimson yarn and fine linen, and he worked cherubim into it.
At the front of the House he made two columns 35 cubits high; the capitals b Meaning of Heb. uncertain. on top of them were 5 cubits high.
He made chainwork in the inner Sanctuary and set it on the top of the columns; he made a hundred pomegranates and set them into the chainwork.
He erected the columns in front of the Great Hall, one to its right and one to its left; the one to the right was called Jachin, and the one to the left, Boaz.

Chapter 4

a Cf. 1 Kings 7.23–50. He made an altar of bronze 20 cubits long, 20 cubits wide, and 10 cubits high.
He made the sea b I.e., a large basin. of cast metal 10 cubits across from brim to brim, perfectly round; it was 5 cubits high, and its circumference was 30 cubits.
Beneath were figures of oxen set all around it, of 10 cubits, encircling the sea; the oxen were in two rows, cast in one piece with it.
It stood upon twelve oxen: three faced north, three faced west, three faced south, and three faced east, with the sea resting upon them; their haunches were all turned inward.
It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like that of a cup, like the petals of a lily. It held 3,000 bath.
He made ten bronze lavers for washing; he set five on the right and five on the left; they would rinse off in them the parts of the burnt offering; but the sea served the priests for washing.
He made ten lampstands of gold as prescribed, and placed them in the Great Hall, five on the right and five on the left.

He made ten tables and placed them in the Great Hall, five on the right and five on the left. He made one hundred gold basins.
He built the court of the priests and the great court, and doors for the great court; he overlaid the doors with bronze.
He set the sea on the right side, at the southeast corner.
Huram made the pails, the shovels, and the basins. With that Huram completed the work he had undertaken for King Solomon in the House of God:
the two columns, the globes, and the two capitals on top of the columns; and the two pieces of network to cover the two globes of the capitals on top of the columns;
the four hundred pomegranates for the two pieces of network, two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two globes of the capitals on top of the columns;
he made the stands and the lavers upon the stands;
one sea with the twelve oxen beneath it;
the pails, the shovels, and the bowls. c Or “forks.” And all the vessels made for King Solomon for the House of the L ORD by Huram his master were of burnished bronze.
The king had them cast in molds dug out of the earth, in the plain of the Jordan between Succoth and Zeredah.
Solomon made a very large number of vessels; the weight of the bronze used could not be reckoned.
And Solomon made all the furnishings that were in the House of God: the altar of gold; the tables for the bread of display;
the lampstands and their lamps, to burn as prescribed in front of the inner Sanctuary, of solid gold;
and the petals, lamps, and tongs, of purest gold;
the snuffers, basins, ladles, and fire pans, of solid gold; and the entrance to the House: the doors of the innermost part of the House, the Holy of Holies, and the doors of the Great Hall of the House, of gold.

Chapter 5

a Cf. 1 Kings 7.51–8.11. When all the work that King Solomon undertook for the House of the L ORD was completed, Solomon brought the things that his father David had consecrated—the silver, the gold, and the utensils—and deposited them in the treasury of the House of God.
Then Solomon convoked the elders of Israel—all the heads of the tribes and the ancestral chiefs of the Israelites—in Jerusalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the L ORD from the City of David, that is, Zion.
All the men of Israel assembled before the king at the Feast, b I.e., of Tabernacles. in the seventh month.
When all the elders of Israel had come, the Levites carried the Ark.
They brought up the Ark and the Tent of Meeting and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent—the Levite priests brought them up.
Meanwhile, King Solomon and the whole community of Israel, who had gathered to him before the Ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen in such abundance that they could not be numbered or counted.
The priests brought the Ark of the L ORD ’s Covenant to its place in the inner Sanctuary of the House, in the Holy of Holies, beneath the wings of the cherubim;
for the cherubim had their wings spread out over the place of the Ark so that the cherubim covered the Ark and its poles from above.
The poles projected beyond the Ark and the ends of the poles were visible from the front of the inner Sanctuary, but they could not be seen from the outside; and there they remain to this day.
There was nothing inside the Ark but the two tablets that Moses placed [there] at Horeb, when the L ORD made [a Covenant] with the Israelites after their departure from Egypt.

When the priests came out of the Sanctuary—all the priests present had sanctified themselves, without keeping to the set divisions—
all the Levite singers, Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, their sons and their brothers, dressed in fine linen, holding cymbals, harps, and lyres, were standing to the east of the altar, and with them were 120 priests who blew trumpets.
The trumpeters and the singers joined in unison to praise and extol the L ORD ; and as the sound of the trumpets, cymbals, and other musical instruments, and the praise of the L ORD, "For He is good, for His steadfast love is eternal," grew louder, the House, the House of the L ORD, was filled with a cloud.
The priests could not stay and perform the service because of the cloud, for the glory of the L ORD filled the House of God.

Chapter 6

a Cf. 1 Kings 8.12–53. Then Solomon declared: "The L ORD has chosen To abide in a thick cloud;
I have built for You A stately House, And a place where You May dwell forever."
Then, as the whole congregation of Israel stood, the king turned and blessed the whole congregation of Israel.
He said,"Blessed is the L ORD God of Israel, b Lit. "who spoke with His own mouth a promise to my father David and has fulfilled with His own hands." who made a promise to my father David and fulfilled it. -b For He said,
'From the time I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I never chose a city from among all the tribes of Israel to build a House where My name might abide; nor did I choose anyone to be the leader of my people Israel.
But then I chose Jerusalem for My name to abide there, and I chose David to rule My people Israel.'
"Now my father David had wanted to build a House for the name of the L ORD God of Israel.
But the L ORD said to my father David, 'As for your wanting to build a House for My name, you do well to want that.
However, you shall not build the House; your son, the issue of your loins, he shall build the House for My name.'
Now the L ORD has fulfilled the promise that He made. I have succeeded c Lit. "risen in place of." my father David and have ascended the throne of Israel, as the L ORD promised. I have built the House for the name of the L ORD God of Israel,
and there I have set the Ark containing the Covenant that the L ORD made with the Israelites."
Then, standing before the altar of the L ORD in front of the whole congregation of Israel, he spread forth his hands.
Solomon had made a bronze platform d Meaning of Heb. uncertain. and placed it in the midst of the Great Court; it was 5 cubits long and 5 cubits wide and 3 cubits high. He stood on it; then, kneeling in front of the whole congregation of Israel, he spread forth his hands to heaven and said, "O L ORD God of Israel, there is no god like You in the heavens and on the earth, You who steadfastly maintain the Covenant with Your servants who walk before You with all their heart;
You who have kept the promises You made to Your servant, my father David; You made a promise and have fulfilled it—as is now the case.
And now, O L ORD God of Israel, keep that promise that You made to Your servant, my father David, 'You shall never lack a descendant in My sight sitting on the throne of Israel if only your children will look to their way and walk in the [path] of My teachings as you have walked before Me.'

Now, therefore, O God of Israel, let the promise that You made to Your servant, my father David, be confirmed.
“Does God really dwell with man on earth? Even the heavens to their uttermost reaches cannot contain You; how much less this House that I have built!
Yet turn, O L ORD my God, to the prayer and supplication of Your servant, and hear the cry and the prayer that Your servant offers to You.
May Your eyes be open day and night toward this House, toward the place where You have resolved to make Your name abide; may You heed the prayers that Your servant offers toward this place.
And when You hear the supplications that Your servant and Your people Israel offer toward this place, give heed in Your heavenly abode—give heed and pardon.
“If a man commits an offense against his fellow, and an oath is exacted from him, causing him to utter an imprecation against himself, and he comes with his imprecation before Your altar in this House,
may You hear in heaven and take action to judge Your servants, requiting him who is in the wrong by bringing down the punishment of his conduct on his head, vindicating him who is in the right by rewarding him according to his righteousness.
“Should Your people Israel be defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against You, and then once again acknowledge Your name and offer prayer and supplication to You in this House,
may You hear in heaven and pardon the sin of Your people Israel, and restore them to the land that You gave to them and to their fathers.
“Should the heavens be shut up and there be no rain because they have sinned against You, and then they pray toward this place and acknowledge Your name and repent of their sins, because You humbled them,
may You hear in heaven and pardon the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, when You have shown them the proper way in which they are to walk, and send down rain upon the land that You gave to Your people as their heritage.
So, too, if there is a famine in the land, if there is pestilence, blight, mildew, locusts, or caterpillars, or if an enemy oppresses them in any of the settlements of their land. “In any plague and in any disease,
any prayer or supplication offered by any person among all Your people Israel—each of whom knows his affliction and his pain—when he spreads forth his hands toward this House,
may You hear in Your heavenly abode, and pardon. Deal with each man according to his ways as You know his heart to be—for You alone know the hearts of all men—
so that they may revere You all the days that they live on the land that You gave to our fathers.
“Or if a foreigner who is not of Your people Israel comes from a distant land for the sake of Your great name, Your mighty hand, and Your outstretched arm, if he comes to pray toward this House,
may You hear in Your heavenly abode and grant whatever the foreigner appeals to You for. Thus all the peoples of the earth will know Your name and revere You, as does Your people Israel; and they will recognize that Your name is attached to this House that I have built.
“When Your people take the field against their enemies in a campaign on which You send them, and they pray to You in the direction of the city which You have chosen and the House which I have built to Your name,
may You hear in heaven their prayer and supplication and uphold their cause.
“When they sin against You—for there is no person who does not sin—and You are angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and their captors carry them off to an enemy land, near or far;

and they take it to heart in the land to which they have been carried off, and repent and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, ‘We have sinned, we have acted perversely, we have acted wickedly,’
and they turn back to You with all their heart and soul, in the land of their captivity where they were carried off, and pray in the direction of their land which You gave to their fathers and the city which You have chosen, and toward the House which I have built for Your name—
may You hear their prayer and supplication in Your heavenly abode, uphold their cause, and pardon Your people who have sinned against You.
Now My God, may Your eyes be open and Your ears attentive to prayer from this place, and now,
Advance, O L ORD God, to your resting-place, You and Your mighty Ark.
Your priests, O L ORD God, are clothed in triumph; Your loyal ones will rejoice in [Your] goodness.
O L ORD God, do not reject Your anointed one; remember the loyalty of Your servant David.”

Chapter 7

a Cf. 1 Kings 8.54–9.9. When Solomon finished praying, fire descended from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the L ORD filled the House.
The priests could not enter the House of the L ORD, for the glory of the L ORD filled the House of the L ORD.
All the Israelites witnessed the descent of the fire and the glory of the L ORD on the House; they knelt with their faces to the ground and prostrated themselves, praising the L ORD, “For He is good, for His steadfast love is eternal.”
Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the L ORD.
King Solomon offered as sacrifices 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep; thus the king and all the people dedicated the House of God.
The priests stood at their watches; the Levites with the instruments for the L ORD ’s music that King David had made to praise the L ORD, “For His steadfast love is eternal,” by means of the psalms of David that they knew. The priests opposite them blew trumpets while all Israel were standing.
Solomon consecrated the center of the court in front of the House of the L ORD, because he presented there the burnt offerings and the fat parts of the offerings of well-being, since the bronze altar that Solomon had made was not able to hold the burnt offerings, the meal offerings, and the fat parts.
At that time Solomon kept the Feast for seven days—all Israel with him—a great assemblage from Lebo-hamath to the Wadi of Egypt.
On the eighth day they held a solemn gathering; they observed the dedication of the altar seven days, and the Feast seven days.
On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he dismissed the people to their homes, rejoicing and in good spirits over the goodness that the L ORD had shown to David and Solomon and His people Israel.
Thus Solomon finished building the House of the L ORD and the royal palace; Solomon succeeded in everything he had set his heart on accomplishing with regard to the House of the L ORD and his palace.
The L ORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this site as My House of sacrifice.
If I shut up the heavens and there is no rain; if I command the locusts to ravage the land; or if I let loose pestilence against My people,
when My people, who bear My name, humble themselves, pray, and seek My favor and turn from their evil ways, I will hear in My heavenly abode and forgive their sins and heal their land.

Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to the prayers from this place.
And now I have chosen and consecrated this House that My name be there forever. My eyes and My heart shall always be there.
As for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked before Me, doing all that I have commanded you, keeping My laws and rules,
then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, in accordance with the Covenant I made with your father David, saying, 'You shall never lack a descendant ruling over Israel.'
But if you turn away from Me and forsake My laws and commandments that I set before you, and go and serve other gods and worship them,
then I will uproot them b I.e., Israel; cf. 1 Kings 9.7. from My land that I gave them, and this House that I consecrated to My name I shall cast out of my sight, and make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples.
And as for this House, once so exalted, everyone passing by it shall be appalled and say, 'Why did the L ORD do thus to this land and to this House?'
And the reply will be, 'It is because they forsook the L ORD God of their fathers who freed them from the land of Egypt, and adopted other gods and worshiped them and served them; therefore He brought all this calamity upon them.'"

Chapter 8

a Cf. 1 Kings 9.10–28. At the end of twenty years, during which Solomon constructed the House of the L ORD and his palace—
Solomon also rebuilt the cities that Huram had given to him, b Lit. "Solomon." and settled Israelites in them—
Solomon marched against Hamath-zobah and overpowered it.
He built Tadmor in the desert and all the garrison towns that he built in Hamath.
He built Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon as fortified cities with walls, gates, and bars,
as well as Baalath and all of Solomon's garrison towns, chariot towns, and cavalry towns—everything that Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem and in the Lebanon, and throughout the territory that he ruled.
All the people that were left of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, none of whom were of Israelite stock—
those of their descendants who were left after them in the land, whom the Israelites had not annihilated—these Solomon subjected to forced labor, as is still the case.
But the Israelites, none of whom Solomon enslaved for his works, served as soldiers and as his chief officers, and as commanders of his chariotry and cavalry.
These were King Solomon's prefects—250 foremen over the people.
Solomon brought up Pharaoh's daughter from the City of David to the palace that he had built for her, for he said, "No wife of mine shall dwell in a palace of King David of Israel, for [the area] is sacred since the Ark of the L ORD has entered it."
At that time, Solomon offered burnt offerings on the altar that he had built in front of the porch.
What was due for each day he sacrificed according to the commandment of Moses for the sabbaths, the new moons, and the thrice-yearly festivals—the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths.
Following the prescription of his father David, he set up the divisions of the priests for their duties, and the Levites for their watches, to praise and to serve alongside the priests, according to each day's

requirement, and the gatekeepers in their watches, gate by gate, for such was the commandment of David, the man of God.
They did not depart from the commandment of the king relating to the priests and the Levites in all these matters and also relating to the treasuries.
And all of Solomon’s work was well executed from the day the House of the L ORD was founded until the House of the L ORD was completed to perfection.
At that time Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Eloth on the seacoast of the land of Edom.
Huram sent him, under the charge of servants, a fleet with a crew of expert seamen; they went with Solomon’s men to Ophir, and obtained gold there in the amount of 450 talents, which they brought to King Solomon.

Chapter 9

a Cf. 1 Kings 10; 11.41–43. The queen of Sheba heard of Solomon’s fame, and came to Jerusalem to test Solomon with hard questions, accompanied by a very large retinue, including camels bearing spices, a great quantity of gold, and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she spoke to him of all that she had on her mind.
Solomon had answers for all her questions; there was nothing that Solomon did not know, nothing to which he could not give her an answer.
When the queen of Sheba saw how wise Solomon was and the palace he had built,
the fare of his table, the seating of his courtiers, the service and attire of his attendants, his butlers and their attire, and the procession with which he went up to the House of the L ORD, it took her breath away.
She said to the king, “What I heard in my own land about you and your wisdom was true.
I did not believe what they said until I came and saw with my own eyes that not even the half of your great wisdom had been described to me; you surpass the report that I heard.
How fortunate are your men and how fortunate are these courtiers of yours who are always in attendance on you and can hear your wisdom!
Blessed is the L ORD your God, who favored you and set you on His throne as a king before the L ORD. It is because of your God’s love for Israel and in order to establish them forever that He made you king over them to execute righteous justice.”
She presented the king with 120 talents of gold, and a vast quantity of spices and precious stones. There were no such spices as those which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon—
also, the servants of Huram and Solomon who brought gold from Ophir brought algum-wood and precious stones.
The king made of the algum-wood ramps for the House of the L ORD and for the royal palace, and lyres and harps for the musicians, whose like had never before been seen in the land of Judah—
King Solomon, in turn, gave the queen of Sheba everything she expressed a desire for, exceeding a return for what she had brought to the king. Then she and her courtiers left and returned to her own land.
The gold that Solomon received every year weighed 666 gold talents,
besides what traders and merchants brought, and the gold and silver that all the kings of Arabia and governors of the regions brought to Solomon.
King Solomon made 200 shields of beaten gold—600 shekels of beaten gold for each shield,
and 300 bucklers of beaten gold—300 [shekels] of gold for each buckler. The king placed them in the Lebanon Forest House.
The king also made a large throne of ivory, overlaid with pure gold.

Six steps led up to the throne; and the throne had a golden footstool attached to it, and arms on either side of the seat. Two lions stood beside the arms,
and twelve lions stood on the six steps, six on either side. None such was ever made for any other kingdom.
All of King Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the utensils of the Lebanon Forest House were of pure gold; silver counted for nothing in Solomon’s days.
The king’s fleet traveled to Tarshish with Huram’s servants. Once every three years, the Tarshish fleet came in, bearing gold and silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.
King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in wealth and wisdom.
All the kings of the earth came to pay homage to Solomon and to listen to the wisdom with which God had endowed him.
Each brought his tribute—silver and gold objects, robes, weapons, and spices, horses and mules—in the amount due each year.
Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots, and 12,000 horsemen, which he stationed in the chariot towns and with the king in Jerusalem.
He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt.
The king made silver as plentiful in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars as plentiful as sycamores in the Shephelah.
Horses were brought for Solomon from Egypt and all the lands.
The other events of Solomon’s reign, early and late, are recorded in the chronicle of the prophet Nathan and in the prophecies of Ahijah the Shilonite and in the visions of Jedo the seer concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat.
Solomon reigned forty years over all Israel in Jerusalem.
Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David; his son Rehoboam succeeded him as king.

Chapter 10

a Cf. 1 Kings 12.1–19. Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to acclaim him king.
Jeroboam son of Nebat learned of it while he was in Egypt where he had fled from King Solomon, and Jeroboam returned from Egypt.
They sent for him; and Jeroboam and all Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam as follows:
“Your father made our yoke heavy. Now lighten the harsh labor and the heavy yoke that your father laid on us, and we will serve you.”
He answered them, “Come back to me in three days.” So the people went away.
King Rehoboam took counsel with the elders who had served during the lifetime of his father Solomon. He said, “What answer do you counsel to give these people?”
They answered him, “If you will be good to these people and appease them and speak to them with kind words, they will be your servants always.”
But he ignored the counsel that the elders gave him, and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him.
“What,” he asked, “do you counsel that we reply to these people who said to me, ‘Lighten the yoke that your father laid on us’?”
And the young men who had grown up with him answered, “Speak thus to the people who said to you, ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us.’ Say to them, ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins.
My father imposed a heavy yoke on you, and I will add to your yoke; my father flogged you with whips, but I [will do so] with scorpions.’”
Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, since the king had told them, “Come back on the third day.”

The king answered them harshly; thus King Rehoboam ignored the elders' counsel.
He spoke to them in accordance with the counsel of the young men, and said, b Some mss. and printed editions read "my father made"; cf. 1 Kings 12.14. "I will make -b your yoke heavy, and I will add to it; my father flogged you with whips, but I [will do so] with scorpions."
The king did not listen to the people, for God had brought it about in order that the L ORD might fulfill the promise that He had made through Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat.
When all Israel [saw] that the king had not listened to them, the people answered the king: "We have no portion in David, No share in Jesse's son! To your tents, O Israel! Now look to your own house, O David." So all Israel returned to their homes. c Lit. "tents."
But Rehoboam continued to reign over the Israelites who lived in the towns of Judah.
King Rehoboam sent out Hadoram, who was in charge of the forced labor, but the Israelites pelted him to death with stones. Thereupon, King Rehoboam hurriedly mounted his chariot and fled to Jerusalem.
Israel has been in revolt against the house of David to this day.

Chapter 11

a With 11.1–4, cf. 1 Kings 12.21–24. When Rehoboam arrived in Jerusalem, he mustered the house of Judah and Benjamin, 180,000 picked fighting men, to make war with Israel in order to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam.
But the word of the L ORD came to Shemaiah, the man of God:
"Say to Rehoboam son of Solomon king of Judah, and to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin:
Thus said the L ORD : You shall not set out to make war on your kinsmen. Let every man return to his home, for this thing has been brought about by Me." They heeded the words of the L ORD and refrained from marching against Jeroboam.
Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem and built fortified towns in Judah.
He built up Bethlehem, and Etam, and Tekoa,
and Beth-zur, and Soco, and Adullam,
and Gath, and Mareshah, and Ziph,
and Adoraim, and Lachish, and Azekah,
and Zorah, and Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah and in Benjamin, as fortified towns.
He strengthened the fortified towns and put commanders in them, along with stores of food, oil, and wine,
and shields and spears in every town. He strengthened them exceedingly; thus Judah and Benjamin were his.
The priests and the Levites, from all their territories throughout Israel, presented themselves to him.
The Levites had left their pasturelands and their holdings and had set out for Judah and Jerusalem, for Jeroboam and his sons had prevented them from serving the L ORD,
having appointed his own priests for the shrines, goat-demons, and calves which he had made.
From all the tribes of Israel, those intent on seeking the L ORD God of Israel followed them to Jerusalem, to sacrifice to the L ORD God of their fathers.
They strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and supported Rehoboam son of Solomon for three years, for they followed the ways of David and Solomon for three years.
Rehoboam married Mahalath daughter of Jerimoth son of David, and Abihail daughter of Eliab son of Jesse.
She bore him sons: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham.

He then took Maacah daughter of Absalom; she bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith.
Rehoboam loved Maacah daughter of Absalom more than his other wives and concubines—for he took eighteen wives and sixty concubines; he begot twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters.
Rehoboam designated Abijah son of Maacah as chief and leader among his brothers, for he intended him to be his successor.
He prudently distributed all his sons throughout the regions of Judah and Benjamin and throughout the fortified towns; he provided them with abundant food, and he sought many wives for them.

Chapter 12

When the kingship of Rehoboam was firmly established, and he grew strong, he abandoned the Teaching of the L ORD, he and all Israel with him.
In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem—for they had trespassed against the L ORD —
with 1,200 chariots, 60,000 horsemen and innumerable troops who came with him from Egypt: Lybians, Sukkites, and Kushites.
He took the fortified towns of Judah and advanced on Jerusalem.
The prophet Shemaiah came to Rehoboam and the officers of Judah, who had assembled in Jerusalem because of Shishak, and said to them, “Thus said the L ORD : You have abandoned Me, so I am abandoning you to Shishak.”
Then the officers of Israel and the king humbled themselves and declared, “The L ORD is in the right.”
When the L ORD saw that they had submitted, the word of the L ORD came to Shemaiah, saying, “Since they have humbled themselves, I will not destroy them but will grant them some measure of deliverance, and My wrath will not be poured out on Jerusalem through Shishak.
They will be subject to him, and they will know the difference between serving Me and serving the kingdoms of the earth.” King Shishak of Egypt marched against Jerusalem.
a With vv. 9–16, cf. 1 Kings 14.26–31. He took away the treasures of the House of the L ORD and the treasures of the royal palace; he took away everything; he took away the golden shields that Solomon had made.
King Rehoboam had bronze shields made in their place, and entrusted them to the officers of the guard b Lit. “runners.” who guarded the entrance to the royal palace.
Whenever the king entered the House of the L ORD, the guards would carry them and then bring them back to the armory of the guards.
After he had humbled himself, the anger of the L ORD was averted and He did not destroy him entirely; in Judah, too, good things were found.
King Rehoboam grew strong in Jerusalem and exercised kingship. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem—the city the L ORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to establish His name there. His mother’s name was Naamah the Ammonitess.
He did what was wrong, for he had not set his heart to seek the L ORD.
The deeds of Rehoboam, early and late, are recorded in the chronicles of the prophet Shemaiah and Iddo the seer, in the manner of genealogy. There was continuous war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.
Rehoboam slept with his fathers and was buried in the City of David. His son Abijah succeeded him as king.

Chapter 13

In the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam, Abijah became king over Judah.
He reigned three years in Jerusalem; his mother’s name was Micaiah daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. There was war between Abijah and Jeroboam.

Abijah joined battle with a force of warriors, 400,000 picked men.
Jeroboam arrayed for battle against him 800,000 picked men, warriors.
Abijah stood on top of Mount Zemaraim in the hill country of Ephraim and said, “Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel.
Surely you know that the L ORD God of Israel gave David kingship over Israel forever—to him and his sons—by a covenant of salt.
Jeroboam son of Nebat had been in the service of Solomon son of David, but he rose up and rebelled against his master.
Riffraff and scoundrels gathered around him and pressed hard upon Rehoboam son of Solomon. Rehoboam was inexperienced and fainthearted and could not stand up to them.
Now you are bent on opposing the kingdom of the L ORD, which is in the charge of the sons of David, because you are a great multitude and possess the golden calves that Jeroboam made for you as gods.
Did you not banish the priests of the L ORD, the sons of Aaron and the Levites, and, like the peoples of the land, appoint your own priests? Anyone who offered himself for ordination with a young bull of the herd and seven rams became a priest of no-gods!
As for us, the L ORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him. The priests who minister to the L ORD are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites are at their tasks.
They offer burnt offerings in smoke each morning and each evening, and the aromatic incense, the rows of bread on the pure table; they kindle the golden lampstand with its lamps burning each evening, for we keep the charge of the L ORD our God, while you have forsaken it.
See, God is with us as our chief, and His priests have the trumpets for sounding blasts against you. O children of Israel, do not fight the L ORD God of your fathers, because you will not succeed.”
Jeroboam, however, had directed the ambush to go around and come from the rear, thus a Lit. “they were.” the main body was -a in front of Judah, while the ambush was behind them.
When Judah turned around and saw that the fighting was before and behind them, they cried out to the L ORD, and the priests blew the trumpets.
The men of Judah raised a shout; and when the men of Judah raised a shout, God routed Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah.
The Israelites fled before Judah, and God delivered them into their hands.
Abijah and his army inflicted a severe defeat on them; 500,000 picked men of Israel fell slain.
The Israelites were crushed at that time, while the people of Judah triumphed because they relied on the L ORD God of their fathers.
Abijah pursued Jeroboam and captured some of his cities—Bethel with its dependencies, Jeshanah with its dependencies, and Ephrain with its dependencies.
Jeroboam could not muster strength again during the days of Abijah. The L ORD struck him down and he died.
But Abijah grew powerful; he married fourteen wives and begat twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters.
The other events of Abijah’s reign, his conduct and his acts, are recorded in the story of the prophet Iddo.
Abijah slept with his fathers and was buried in the City of David; his son Asa succeeded him as king. The land was untroubled for ten years.

Chapter 14

Asa did what was good and pleasing to the L ORD his God.
He abolished the alien altars and shrines; he smashed the pillars and cut down the sacred posts.
He ordered Judah to turn to the L ORD God of their fathers and to observe the Teaching and the Commandment.

He abolished the shrines and the incense stands throughout the cities of Judah, and the kingdom was untroubled under him.
He built fortified towns in Judah, since the land was untroubled and he was not engaged in warfare during those years, for the L ORD had granted him respite.
He said to Judah, “Let us build up these cities and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bars, while the land is at our disposal because we turned to the L ORD our God—we turned [to Him] and He gave us respite on all sides.” They were successful in their building.
Asa had an army of 300,000 men from Judah bearing shields and spears, and 280,000 from Benjamin bearing bucklers and drawing the bow; all these were valiant men.
Zerah the Cushite marched out against them with an army of a thousand thousand and 300 chariots. When he reached Mareshah
Asa confronted him, and the battle lines were drawn in the valley of Zephat by Mareshah.
Asa called to the L ORD his God, and said, “O L ORD, it is all the same to You to help the numerous and the powerless. Help us, O L ORD our God, for we rely on You, and in Your name we have come against this great multitude. You are the L ORD our God. Let no mortal hinder You.”
So the L ORD routed the Cushites before Asa and Judah, and the Cushites fled.
Asa and the army with him pursued them as far as Gerar. Many of the Cushites fell wounded beyond recovery, for they broke before the L ORD and His camp. Very much spoil was taken.
All the cities in the vicinity of Gerar were ravaged, for a terror of the L ORD seized them. All the cities were plundered, and they yielded much booty.
They also ravaged the encampment of herdsmen, capturing much sheep and camels. Then they returned to Jerusalem.

Chapter 15

The spirit of God came upon Azariah son of Oded.
He came to Asa and said to him, “Listen to me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin; the L ORD is with you as long as you are with Him. If you turn to Him, He will respond to you, but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.
Israel has gone many days without the true God, without a priest to give instruction and without Teaching.
But in distress it returned to the L ORD God of Israel, and sought Him, and He responded to them.
At those times, a Lit. “one who goes out and one who comes in.” no wayfarer -a was safe, for there was much tumult among all the inhabitants of the lands.
Nation was crushed by nation and city by city, for God threw them into panic with every kind of trouble.
As for you, be strong, do not be disheartened, for there is reward for your labor.”
When Asa heard these words, the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage and removed the abominations from the entire land of Judah and Benjamin and from the cities that he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. He restored the altar of the L ORD in front of the porch of the L ORD.
He assembled all the people of Judah and Benjamin and those people of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon who sojourned among them, for many in Israel had thrown in their lot with him when they saw that the L ORD his God was with him.
They were assembled in Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa.

They brought sacrifices to the L ORD on that day; they brought 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep of the spoil.
They entered into a covenant to worship the L ORD God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul.
Whoever would not worship the L ORD God of Israel would be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman.
So they took an oath to the L ORD in a loud voice and with shouts, with trumpeting and blasts of the horn.
All Judah rejoiced over the oath, for they swore with all their heart and sought Him with all their will. He responded to them and gave them respite on every side.
b With vv. 16–19, cf. 1 Kings 15.13–16. He c I.e., Asa. also deposed Maacah mother of King Asa from the rank of queen mother, because she had made an abominable thing for [the goddess] Asherah. Asa cut down her abominable thing, reduced it to dust, and burned it in the Wadi Kidron.
The shrines, indeed, were not abolished in Israel; however, Asa was wholehearted [with the L ORD] all his life.
He brought into the House of God the things that he and his father had consecrated—silver, gold, and utensils.
There was no war until the thirty-fifth year of the reign of Asa.

Chapter 16

a Cf. 1 Kings 15.17–24. In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, King Baasha of Israel marched against Judah and built up Ramah to block b Lit. “one who goes out and one who comes in.” all movement -b of King Asa of Judah.
Asa took all the silver and gold from the treasuries of the House of the L ORD and the royal palace, and sent them to King Ben-hadad of Aram, who resided in Damascus, with this message:
“There is a pact between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. I herewith send you silver and gold; go and break your pact with King Baasha of Israel so that he may withdraw from me.”
Ben-hadad acceded to King Asa’s request; he sent his army commanders against the towns of Israel and ravaged Ijon, Dan, Abel-maim, and all the garrison towns of Naphtali.
When Baasha heard about it, he stopped building up Ramah and put an end to the work on it.
Then King Asa mustered all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber with which Baasha had built up Ramah; with these King Asa built up Geba and Mizpah.
At that time, Hanani the seer came to King Asa of Judah and said to him, “Because you relied on the king of Aram and did not rely on the L ORD your God, therefore the army of the king of Aram has slipped out of your hands.
The Cushites and Lybians were a mighty army with chariots and horsemen in very great numbers, yet because you relied on the L ORD He delivered them into your hands.
For the eyes of the L ORD range over the entire earth, to give support to those who are wholeheartedly with Him. You have acted foolishly in this matter, and henceforth you will be beset by wars.”
Asa was vexed at the seer and put him into the stocks, c Meaning of Heb. uncertain. for he was furious with him because of that. Asa inflicted cruelties on some of the people at that time.
The acts of Asa, early and late, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah and Israel.
In the thirty-ninth year of his reign, Asa suffered from an acute foot ailment; but ill as he was, he still did not turn to the L ORD but to physicians.
Asa slept with his fathers. He died in the forty-first year of his reign

and was buried in the grave that he had made for himself in the City of David. He was laid in his resting-place, which was filled with spices of all kinds, expertly blended; a very great fire was made in his honor.

Chapter 17

His son Jehoshaphat succeeded him as king, and took firm hold of Israel.
He stationed troops in all the fortified towns of Judah, and stationed garrisons throughout the land of Judah and the cities of Ephraim which his father Asa had captured.
The L ORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the earlier ways of his father David, and did not worship the Baalim,
but worshiped the God of his father and followed His commandments—unlike the behavior of Israel.
So the L ORD established the kingdom in his hands, and all Judah gave presents to Jehoshaphat. He had wealth and glory in abundance.
His mind was elevated in the ways of the L ORD. Moreover, he abolished the shrines and the sacred posts from Judah.
In the third year of his reign he sent his officers Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah throughout the cities of Judah to offer instruction.
With them were the Levites, Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah and Tob-adonijah the Levites; with them were Elishama and Jehoram the priests.
They offered instruction throughout Judah, having with them the Book of the Teaching of the L ORD. They made the rounds of all the cities of Judah and instructed the people.
A terror of the L ORD seized all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, and they did not go to war with Jehoshaphat.
From Philistia a load of silver was brought to Jehoshaphat as tribute. The Arabs, too, brought him flocks: 7,700 rams and 7,700 he-goats.
Jehoshaphat grew greater and greater, and he built up fortresses and garrison towns in Judah.
He carried out extensive works in the towns of Judah, and had soldiers, valiant men, in Jerusalem.
They were enrolled according to their clans. Judah: chiefs of thousands, Adnah the chief, who had 300,000 valiant men;
next to him was Jehohanan the captain, who had 280,000;
next to him was Amasiah son of Zichri, who made a freewill offering to the L ORD. He had 200,000 valiant men.
Benjamin: Eliada, a valiant man, who had 200,000 men armed with bow and buckler;
next to him was Jehozabad, who had 180,000 armed men.
These served the king, besides those whom the king assigned to the fortified towns throughout Judah.

Chapter 18

a Cf. 1 Kings 22. So Jehoshaphat had wealth and honor in abundance, and he allied himself by marriage to Ahab.
After some years had passed, he came to visit Ahab at Samaria. Ahab slaughtered sheep and oxen in abundance for him and for the people with him, and persuaded him to march against Ramoth-gilead.
King Ahab of Israel said to King Jehoshaphat of Judah, “Will you accompany me to Ramoth-gilead?” He answered him, “I will do what you do; my troops shall be your troops and shall accompany you in battle.”
Jehoshaphat then said to the king of Israel, “But first inquire for the word of the L ORD.”

So the king of Israel gathered the prophets, four hundred men, and asked them, “Shall I march upon Ramoth-gilead for battle, or shall I not?”
“March,” they said, “and God will deliver it into the king’s hands.”
Then Jehoshaphat asked, “Is there not another prophet of the L ORD here through whom we can inquire?”
And the king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, “There is one more man through whom we can inquire of the L ORD ; but I hate him, because he never prophesies anything good for me but always misfortune. He is Micaiah son of Imlah.” Jehoshaphat replied, “Let the king not say such a thing.”
So the king of Israel summoned an officer and said, “Bring Micaiah son of Imlah at once.”
The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah, wearing their robes, were seated on their thrones situated in the threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets were prophesying before them.
Zedekiah son of Chenaanah had provided himself with iron horns; and he said, “Thus said the L ORD : With these you shall gore the Arameans till you make an end of them.”
All the other prophets were prophesying similarly, “March against Ramoth-gilead and be victorious! The L ORD will deliver it into Your Majesty’s hands.”
The messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, the words of the prophets are unanimously favorable to the king. Let your word be like that of the rest of them; speak a favorable word.”
“By the life of the L ORD,” Micaiah answered, “I will speak only what my God tells me.”
When he came before the king, the king said to him, “Micah, b A shortened form of Micaiah. shall we march against Ramoth-gilead for battle or shall we not?” He answered him, “March and be victorious! They will be delivered into your hands.”
The king said to him, “How many times must I adjure you to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the L ORD?”
Then he said, “I saw all Israel scattered over the hills like sheep without a shepherd; and the L ORD said, ‘These have no master; let everyone return to his home in safety.’”
The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you that he would not prophesy good fortune for me, but only misfortune?”
Then [Micaiah] said, “Indeed, hear now the word of the L ORD! I saw the L ORD seated upon His throne, with all the host of heaven standing in attendance to the right and to the left of Him.
The L ORD asked, ‘Who will entice King Ahab of Israel so that he will march and fall at Ramoth-gilead?’ Then one said this and another said that,
until a certain spirit came forward and stood before the L ORD and said, ‘I will entice him.’ ‘How?’ said the L ORD to him.
And he replied, ‘I will go forth and become a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ Then He said, ‘You will entice with success. Go forth and do it.’
Thus the L ORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours; for the L ORD has decreed misfortune for you.”
Thereupon Zedekiah son of Chenaanah came up and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and exclaimed, “However did the spirit of the L ORD pass from me to speak with you!”
Micaiah replied, “You will see on the day when you try to hide in the innermost room.”
Then the king of Israel said, “Take Micaiah and turn him over to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Prince Joash,
and say, ‘The king’s orders are: Put this fellow in prison, and let his fare be scant bread and scant water until I come home safe.’”

To which Micaiah retorted, “If you ever come home safe, the L ORD has not spoken through me.” He said further, c Cf. Mic. 1.2. “Listen, all you peoples!” -c
The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah marched against Ramoth-gilead.
The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, d Infinitives used for finite verb; cf. note at 1 Kings 22.30. “I will disguise myself and go -d into the battle, but you, wear your robes.” So the king of Israel disguised himself, and they went into the battle.
The king of Aram had given these instructions to his chariot officers: “Do not attack anyone, small or great, except the king of Israel.”
When the chariot officers saw Jehoshaphat, whom they took for the king of Israel, they wheeled around to attack him, and Jehoshaphat cried out and the L ORD helped him, and God diverted them from him.
And when the chariot officers realized that he was not the king of Israel, they gave up the pursuit.
Then a man drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between the e Meaning of Heb. uncertain. plates of the -e armor and he said to his charioteer, “Turn around and get me behind the lines; I am wounded.”
The battle e Meaning of Heb. uncertain. raged all day long, -e and the king remained propped up in the chariot facing Aram until dusk; he died as the sun was setting.

Chapter 19

King Jehoshaphat of Judah returned safely to his palace, to Jerusalem.
Jehu son of Hanani the seer went out to meet King Jehoshaphat and said to him, “Should one give aid to the wicked and befriend those who hate the L ORD? For this, wrath is upon you from the L ORD.
However, there is some good in you, for you have purged the land of the sacred posts and have dedicated yourself to worship God.”
Jehoshaphat remained in Jerusalem a while and then went out among the people from Beer-sheba to the hill country of Ephraim; he brought them back to the L ORD God of their fathers.
He appointed judges in the land in all the fortified towns of Judah, in each and every town.
He charged the judges: “Consider what you are doing, for you judge not on behalf of man, but on behalf of the L ORD, and He is with you when you pass judgment.
Now let the dread of the L ORD be upon you; act with care, for there is no injustice or favoritism or bribe-taking with the L ORD our God.”
Jehoshaphat also appointed in Jerusalem some Levites and priests and heads of the clans of Israelites for rendering judgment in matters of the L ORD, and for disputes. Then they returned to Jerusalem.
He charged them, “This is how you shall act: in fear of the L ORD, with fidelity, and with whole heart.
When a dispute comes before you from your brothers living in their towns, whether about homicide, or about ritual, or laws or rules, you must instruct them so that they do not incur guilt before the L ORD and wrath be upon you and your brothers. Act so and you will not incur guilt.
See, Amariah the chief priest is over you in all cases concerning the L ORD, and Zebadiah son of Ishmael is the commander of the house of Judah in all cases concerning the king; the Levitical officials are at your disposal; act with resolve and the L ORD be with the good.”

Chapter 20

After that, Moabites, Ammonites, together with some Ammonim, a Probably for m‘nym “Meunites” (1 Chron. 4.41); cf. Kimhi. came against Jehoshaphat to wage war.

The report was brought to Jehoshaphat: “A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, from Aram, and is now in Hazazon-tamar”—that is, Ein-gedi.
Jehoshaphat was afraid; he decided to resort to the L ORD and proclaimed a fast for all Judah.
Judah assembled to beseech the L ORD. They also came from all the towns of Judah to seek the L ORD.
Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem in the House of the L ORD at the front of the new court.
He said, “L ORD God of our fathers, truly You are the God in heaven and You rule over the kingdoms of the nations; power and strength are Yours; none can oppose You.
O our God, you dispossessed the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel, and You gave it to the descendants of Your friend Abraham forever.
They settled in it and in it built for You a House for Your name. They said,
‘Should misfortune befall us—the punishing sword, pestilence, or famine, we shall stand before this House and before You—for Your name is in this House—and we shall cry out to You in our distress, and You will listen and deliver us.’
Now the people of Ammon, Moab, and the hill country of Seir, into whose [land] You did not let Israel come when they came from Egypt, but they turned aside from them and did not wipe them out,
these now repay us by coming to expel us from Your possession which You gave us as ours.
O our God, surely You will punish them, for we are powerless before this great multitude that has come against us, and do not know what to do, but our eyes are on You.”
All Judah stood before the L ORD with their little ones, their womenfolk, and their children.
Then in the midst of the congregation the spirit of the L ORD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah son of Benaiah son of Jeiel son of Mattaniah the Levite, of the sons of Asaph,
and he said, “Give heed, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat; thus said the L ORD to you, ‘Do not fear or be dismayed by this great multitude, for the battle is God’s, not yours.
March down against them tomorrow as they come up by the Ascent of Ziz; you will find them at the end of the wadi in the direction of the wilderness of Jeruel.
It is not for you to fight this battle; stand by, wait, and witness your deliverance by the L ORD, O Judah and Jerusalem; do not fear or be dismayed; go forth to meet them tomorrow and the L ORD will be with you.’”
Jehoshaphat bowed low with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem threw themselves down before the L ORD to worship the L ORD.
Levites of the sons of Kohath and of the sons of Korah got up to extol the L ORD God of Israel at the top of their voices.
Early the next morning they arose and went forth to the wilderness of Tekoa. As they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, “Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: Trust firmly in the L ORD your God and you will stand firm; trust firmly in His prophets and you will succeed.”
After taking counsel with the people, he stationed singers to the L ORD extolling the One majestic in holiness as they went forth ahead of the vanguard, saying, “Praise the L ORD, for His steadfast love is eternal.”
As they began their joyous shouts and hymns, the L ORD set ambushes for the men of Ammon, Moab, and the hill country of Seir, who were marching against Judah, and they were routed.

The Ammonites and Moabites turned against the men of the hill country of Seir to exterminate and annihilate them. When they had made an end of the men of Seir, each helped to destroy his fellow.
When Judah reached the lookout in the wilderness and looked for the multitude, they saw them lying on the ground as corpses; not one had survived.
Jehoshaphat and his army came to take the booty, and found an abundance of goods, corpses, and precious objects, which they pillaged, more than they could carry off. For three days they were taking booty, there was so much of it.
On the fourth day they assembled in the Valley of Blessing—for there they blessed the L ORD ; that is why that place is called the Valley of Blessing to this day.
All the men of Judah and Jerusalem with Jehoshaphat at their head returned joyfully to Jerusalem, for the L ORD had given them cause for rejoicing over their enemies.
They came to Jerusalem to the House of the L ORD, to the accompaniment of harps, lyres, and trumpets.
The terror of God seized all the kingdoms of the lands when they heard that the L ORD had fought the enemies of Israel.
The kingdom of Jehoshaphat was untroubled, and his God granted him respite on all sides.
b With vv. 31–37, cf. 1 Kings 22.41–49. Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-five years. His mother’s name was Azubah daughter of Shilhi.
He followed the course of his father Asa and did not deviate from it, doing what was pleasing to the L ORD.
However, the shrines did not cease; the people still did not direct their heart toward the God of their fathers.
As for the other events of Jehoshaphat’s reign, early and late, they are recorded in the annals of Jehu son of Hanani, which were included in the book of the kings of Israel.
Afterward, King Jehoshaphat of Judah entered into a partnership with King Ahaziah of Israel, thereby acting wickedly.
He joined with him in constructing ships to go to Tarshish; the ships were constructed in Ezion-geber.
Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, “As you have made a partnership with Ahaziah, the L ORD will break up your work.” The ships were wrecked and were unable to go to Tarshish.

Chapter 21

a Cf. 2 Kings 8.17–24. Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers and was buried with his fathers in the City of David; his son Jehoram succeeded him as king.
He had brothers, sons of Jehoshaphat: Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariahu, Michael, and Shephatiah; all these were sons of King Jehoshaphat of Israel.
Their father gave them many gifts of silver, gold, and [other] presents, as well as fortified towns in Judah, but he gave the kingdom to Jehoram because he was the first-born.
Jehoram proceeded to take firm hold of his father’s kingdom and put to the sword all his brothers, as well as some of the officers of Israel.
Jehoram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years.
He followed the practices of the kings of Israel doing what the House of Ahab had done, for he married a daughter of Ahab; he did what was displeasing to the L ORD.

However, the L ORD refrained from destroying the House of David for the sake of the covenant he had made with David, and in accordance with his promise to maintain a lamp for him and his descendants for all time.
During his reign, the Edomites rebelled against Judah’s rule and set up a king of their own.
Jehoram advanced [against them] with his officers and all his chariotry. He arose by night and attacked the Edomites, who surrounded him and the chariot commanders.
Edom has been in rebellion against Judah, to this day; Libnah also rebelled against him at that time, because he had forsaken the L ORD God of his fathers.
Moreover, he built shrines in the hill country of Judah; he led astray the inhabitants of Jerusalem and made Judah wayward.
A letter from Elijah the prophet came to him which read, “Thus says the L ORD God of your father David: Since you have not followed the practices of your father Jehoshaphat and the practices of King Asa of Judah,
but have followed the practices of the kings of Israel, leading astray Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem as the House of Ahab led them astray, and have also killed your brothers of your father’s house, who were better than you,
therefore, the L ORD will inflict a great blow upon your people, your sons, and your wives and all your possessions.
As for you, you will be severely stricken with a disorder of the bowels year after year until your bowels drop out.”
The L ORD stirred up the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabs who were neighbors of the Cushites against Jehoram.
They marched against Judah, breached its defenses, and carried off all the property that was found in the king’s palace, as well as his sons and his wives. The only son who remained was Jehoahaz, his youngest.
After this, the L ORD afflicted him with an incurable disease of the bowels.
Some years later, when a period of two years had elapsed, his bowels dropped out because of his disease, and he died a gruesome death. His people did not make a fire for him like the fire for his fathers.
He was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. He departed unpraised, b Following Septuagint; cf. Arabic ḥamada, “praise.” and was buried in the City of David, but not in the tombs of the kings.

Chapter 22

a With vv. 1–6, cf. 2 Kings 8.25–29; with vv. 8–9, cf. 2 Kings 9.27–28; with vv. 10–12, cf. 2 Kings 11.1–3. The inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his stead, because all the older ones had been killed by the troops that penetrated the camp with the Arabs.
Ahaziah son of Jehoram reigned as king of Judah.
Ahaziah was forty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem one year; his mother’s name was Athaliah daughter of Omri.
He too followed the practices of the house of Ahab, for his mother counseled him to do evil.
He did what was displeasing to the L ORD, like the house of Ahab, for they became his counselors after his father’s death, to his ruination.
Moreover, he followed their counsel and marched with Jehoram son of King Ahab of Israel to battle against King Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead, where the Arameans wounded Joram.
He returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds inflicted on him at Ramah when he fought against King Hazael of Aram. King Azariah son of Jehoram of Judah went down to Jezreel to visit Jehoram son of Ahab while he was ill.

God caused the downfall of Ahaziah because he visited Joram. During his visit he went out with Jehoram to Jehu son of Nimshi, whom the L ORD had anointed to cut off the house of Ahab.
In the course of bringing the house of Ahab to judgment, Jehu came upon the officers of Judah and the nephews of Ahaziah, ministers of Ahaziah, and killed them.
He sent in search of Ahaziah, who was caught hiding in Samaria, was brought to Jehu, and put to death. He was given a burial, because it was said, "He is the son of Jehoshaphat who worshiped the L ORD wholeheartedly." So the house of Ahaziah could not muster the strength to rule.
When Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, learned that her son was dead, she promptly did away with all who were of the royal stock of the house of Judah.
But Jehoshabeath, daughter of the king, spirited away Ahaziah's son Joash from among the princes who were being slain, and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Jehoshabeath, daughter of King Jehoram, wife of the priest Jehoiada—she was the sister of Ahaziah—kept him hidden from Athaliah so that he was not put to death.
He stayed with them for six years, hidden in the House of God, while Athaliah reigned over the land.

Chapter 23

a Cf. 2 Kings 11.4–20. In the seventh year, Jehoiada took courage and brought the chiefs of the hundreds, Azariah son of Jeroham, Ishmael son of Jehohanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat son of Zichri, into a compact with him.
They went through Judah and assembled the Levites from all the towns of Judah, and the chiefs of the clans of Israel. They came to Jerusalem and the entire assembly made a covenant with the king in the House of God. He b I.e., Jehoiada. said to them, "The son of the king shall be king according to the promise the L ORD made concerning the sons of David.
This is what you must do: One third of you, priests and Levites, who are on duty for the week, shall be gatekeepers at the thresholds;
another third shall be stationed in the royal palace, and the other third at the Foundation Gate. All the people shall be in the courts of the House of the L ORD.
Let no one enter the House of the L ORD except the priests and the ministering Levites. They may enter because they are sanctified, but all the people shall obey the proscription of the L ORD.
The Levites shall surround the king on every side, every man with his weapons at the ready; and whoever enters the House shall be killed. Stay close to the king in his comings and goings."
The Levites and all Judah did just as Jehoiada the priest ordered: each took his men—those who were on duty that week and those who were off duty that week, for Jehoiada the priest had not dismissed the divisions.
Jehoiada the priest gave the chiefs of the hundreds King David's spears and shields and quivers that were kept in the House of God.
He stationed the entire force, each man with his weapons at the ready, from the south end of the House to the north end of the House, at the altar and the House, to guard the king on every side.
Then they brought out the king's son, and placed upon him the crown and the insignia. They proclaimed him king, and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him and shouted, "Long live the king!"
When Athaliah heard the shouting of the people and the guards and the acclamation of the king, she came out to the people, to the House of the L ORD.

She looked about and saw the king standing by his pillar at the entrance, the chiefs with their trumpets beside the king, and all the people of the land rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and the singers with musical instruments leading the hymns. Athaliah rent her garments and cried out, “Treason, treason!”
Then the priest Jehoiada ordered out the army officers, the chiefs of hundreds, and said to them, “Take her out between the ranks, and if anyone follows her, put him to the sword.” For the priest thought, “Let her not be put to death in the House of the L ORD.”
They cleared a passage for her and she came to the entrance of the Horse Gate to the royal palace; there she was put to death.
Then Jehoiada solemnized a covenant between himself and the people and the king that they should be the people of the L ORD.
All the people then went to the temple of Baal; they tore it down and smashed its altars and images to bits, and they slew Mattan, the priest of Baal, in front of the altars.
Jehoiada put the officers of the House of the L ORD in the charge of Levite priests whom David had assigned over the House of the L ORD to offer up burnt offerings, as is prescribed in the Teaching of Moses, accompanied by joyful song as ordained by David.
He stationed the gatekeepers at the gates of the House of the L ORD to prevent the entry of anyone unclean for any reason.
He took the chiefs of hundreds, the nobles, and the rulers of the people and all the people of the land, and they escorted the king down from the House of the L ORD into the royal palace by the upper gate, and seated the king on the royal throne.
All the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet. As for Athaliah, she had been put to the sword.

Chapter 24

a Cf. 2 Kings 12.1–22. Jehoash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem forty years. His mother’s name was Zibiah of Beer-sheba.
All the days of the priest Jehoiada, Jehoash did what was pleasing to the L ORD.
Jehoiada took two wives for him, by whom he had sons and daughters.
Afterward, Joash decided to renovate the House of the L ORD.
He assembled the priests and the Levites and charged them as follows: “Go out to the towns of Judah and collect money from all Israel for the annual repair of the House of your God. Do it quickly.” But the Levites did not act quickly.
The king summoned Jehoiada the chief and said to him, “Why have you not seen to it that the Levites brought the tax imposed by Moses, the servant of the L ORD, and the congregation of Israel from Judah and Jerusalem to the Tent of the Pact?”
For the children of the wicked Athaliah had violated the House of God and had even used the sacred things of the House of the L ORD for the Baals.
The king ordered that a chest be made and placed on the outside of the gate of the House of the L ORD.
A proclamation was issued in Judah and Jerusalem to bring the tax imposed on Israel in the wilderness by Moses, the servant of God.
All the officers and all the people gladly brought it and threw it into the chest till it was full.
Whenever the chest was brought to the royal officers by the Levites, and they saw that it contained much money, the royal scribe and the agent of the chief priest came and emptied out the chest and carried it back to its place. They did this day by day, and much money was collected.
The king and Jehoiada delivered the money to those who oversaw the tasks connected with the work of the House of the L ORD. They hired masons and

carpenters to renovate the House of the L ORD, as well as craftsmen in iron and bronze to repair the House of the L ORD.
The overseers did their work; under them the work went well and they restored the House of God to its original form and repaired it.
When they had finished, they brought the money that was left over to the king and Jehoiada; it was made into utensils for the House of the L ORD, service vessels: buckets and ladles, golden and silver vessels. Burnt offerings were offered up regularly in the House of the L ORD all the days of Jehoiada.
Jehoiada reached a ripe old age and died; he was one hundred and thirty years old at his death.
They buried him in the City of David together with the kings, because he had done good in Israel, and on behalf of God and His House.
But after the death of Jehoiada, the officers of Judah came, bowing low to the king; and the king listened to them.
They forsook the House of the L ORD God of their fathers to serve the sacred posts and idols; and there was wrath upon Judah and Jerusalem because of this guilt of theirs.
The L ORD sent prophets among them to bring them back to Him; they admonished them but they would not pay heed.
Then the spirit of God enveloped Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest; he stood above the people and said to them, “Thus God said: Why do you transgress the commandments of the L ORD when you cannot succeed? Since you have forsaken the L ORD, He has forsaken you.”
They conspired against him and pelted him with stones in the court of the House of the L ORD, by order of the king.
King Joash disregarded the loyalty that his father Jehoiada had shown to him, and killed his son. As he was dying, he said, “May the L ORD see and requite it.”
At the turn of the year, the army of Aram marched against him; they invaded Judah and Jerusalem, and wiped out all the officers of the people from among the people, and sent all the booty they took to the king of Damascus.
The invading army of Aram had come with but a few men, but the L ORD delivered a very large army into their hands, because they had forsaken the L ORD God of their fathers. They inflicted punishments on Joash.
When they withdrew, having left him with many wounds, his courtiers plotted against him because of the murder b Lit. “blood.” of the sons of Jehoiada the priest, and they killed him in bed. He died and was buried in the City of David; he was not buried in the tombs of the kings.
These were the men who conspired against him: Zabad son of Shimeath the Ammonitess, and Jehozabad son of Shimrith the Moabitess.
As to his sons, and the many pronouncements against him, and his rebuilding of the House of God, they are recorded in the story in the book of the kings. His son Amaziah succeeded him as king.

Chapter 25

a Cf. 2 Kings 14. Amaziah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem; his mother’s name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem.
He did what was pleasing to the L ORD, but not with a whole heart.
Once he had the kingdom firmly under control, he executed the courtiers who had assassinated his father the king.
But he did not put their children to death for [he acted] in accordance with what is written in the Teaching, in the Book of Moses, where the L ORD commanded, b Cf. Deut. 24.16. “Parents shall not die for children, nor shall children die for parents, but every person shall die only for his own crime.” -b

Amaziah assembled the men of Judah, and he put all the men of Judah and Benjamin under officers of thousands and officers of hundreds, by clans. He mustered them from the age of twenty upward, and found them to be 300,000 picked men fit for service, able to bear spear and shield.
He hired 100,000 warriors from Israel for 100 talents of silver.
Then a man of God came to him and said, "O king! Do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the L ORD is not with Israel—all these Ephraimites.
But go by yourself and do it; take courage for battle, [else] God will make you fall before the enemy. For in God there is power to help one or make one fall!"
Amaziah said to the man of God, "And what am I to do about the 100 talents I gave for the Israelite force?" The man of God replied, "The L ORD has the means to give you much more than that."
So Amaziah detached the force that came to him from Ephraim, [ordering them] to go back to their place. They were greatly enraged against Judah and returned to their place in a rage.
Amaziah took courage and, leading his army, he marched to the Valley of Salt. He slew 10,000 men of Seir;
another 10,000 the men of Judah captured alive and brought to the top of Sela. They threw them down from the top of Sela and every one of them was burst open.
The men of the force that Amaziah had sent back so they would not go with him into battle made forays against the towns of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon. They slew 3,000 of them, and took much booty.
After Amaziah returned from defeating the Edomites, he had the gods of the men of Seir brought, and installed them as his gods; he prostrated himself before them, and to them he made sacrifice.
The L ORD was enraged at Amaziah, and sent a prophet to him who said to him, "Why are you worshiping the gods of a people who could not save their people from you?"
As he spoke to him, [Amaziah] said to him, "Have we appointed you a counselor to the king? Stop, else you will be killed!" The prophet stopped, saying, "I see God has counseled that you be destroyed, since you act this way and disregard my counsel."
Then King Amaziah of Judah took counsel and sent this message to Joash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, "Come, let us confront each other!"
King Joash of Israel sent back this message to King Amaziah of Judah, "The thistle in Lebanon sent this message to the cedar in Lebanon, 'Give your daughter to my son in marriage.' But a wild beast in Lebanon passed by and trampled the thistle.
You boast that you have defeated the Edomites and you are ambitious to get more glory. Now stay at home, lest, provoking disaster you fall, dragging Judah down with you."
But Amaziah paid no heed—it was God's doing, in order to deliver them up because they worshiped the gods of Edom.
King Joash of Israel marched up, and he and King Amaziah of Judah confronted each other at Beth-shemesh in Judah.
The men of Judah were routed by Israel, and they all fled to their homes.
King Joash of Israel captured Amaziah son of Joash son of Jehoahaz, king of Judah, in Beth-shemesh. He brought him to Jerusalem and made a breach of 400 cubits in the wall of Jerusalem, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate.
Then, with all the gold and silver and all the utensils that were to be found in the House of God in the custody of Obed-edom, and with the treasuries of the royal palace, and with the hostages, he returned to Samaria.
King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah lived fifteen years after the death of King Joash son of Jehoahaz of Israel.

The other events of Amaziah’s reign, early and late, are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.
From the time that Amaziah turned from following the L ORD, a conspiracy was formed against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent men after him to Lachish and they put him to death there.
They brought his body back on horses and buried him with his fathers in the city of Judah.

Chapter 26

Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah, who was sixteen years old, and proclaimed him king to succeed his father Amaziah.
It was he who rebuilt Eloth and restored it to Judah after King [Amaziah] slept with his fathers.
Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem; his mother’s name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem.
He did what was pleasing to the L ORD just as his father Amaziah had done.
He applied himself to the worship of God during the time of Zechariah, instructor in the visions a Some Heb. mss. read byr’t; compare ancient versions, “fear.” of God; during the time he worshiped the L ORD, God made him prosper.
He went forth to fight the Philistines, and breached the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod; he built towns in [the region of] Ashdod and among the Philistines.
God helped him against the Philistines, against the Arabs who lived in Gur-baal, and the Meunites.
The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread to the approaches of Egypt, for he grew exceedingly strong.
Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem on the Corner Gate and the Valley Gate and on the Angle, and fortified them.
He built towers in the wilderness and hewed out many cisterns, for he had much cattle, and farmers in the foothills and on the plain, and vine dressers in the mountains and on the fertile lands, for he loved the soil.
Uzziah had an army of warriors, a battle-ready force who were mustered by Jeiel the scribe and Maasseiah the adjutant under Hananiah, one of the king’s officers.
The clan chiefs, valiants, totaled 2,600;
under them was the trained army of 307,500, who made war with might and power to aid the king against the enemy.
Uzziah provided them—the whole army—with shields and spears, and helmets and mail, and bows and slingstones.
He made clever devices in Jerusalem, set on the towers and the corners, for shooting arrows and large stones. His fame spread far, for he was helped wonderfully, and he became strong.
When he was strong, he grew so arrogant he acted corruptly: he trespassed against his God by entering the Temple of the L ORD to offer incense on the incense altar.
The priest Azariah, with eighty other brave priests of the L ORD, followed him in
and, confronting King Uzziah, said to him, “It is not for you, Uzziah, to offer incense to the L ORD, but for the Aaronite priests, who have been consecrated, to offer incense. Get out of the Sanctuary, for you have trespassed; there will be no glory in it for you from the L ORD God.”
Uzziah, holding the censer and ready to burn incense, got angry; but as he got angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead in front of the priests in the House of the L ORD beside the incense altar.

When the chief priest Azariah and all the other priests looked at him, his forehead was leprous, so they rushed him out of there; he too made haste to get out, for the L ORD had struck him with a plague.
King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death. He lived in b Meaning of Heb. uncertain. isolated quarters -b as a leper, for he was cut off from the House of the L ORD —while Jotham his son was in charge of the king’s house and governed the people of the land.
The other events of Uzziah’s reign, early and late, were recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.
Uzziah slept with his fathers in the burial field of the kings, because, they said, he was a leper; his son Jotham succeeded him as king.

Chapter 27

Jotham was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem; his mother’s name was Jerushah daughter of Zadok.
He did what was pleasing to the L ORD just as his father Uzziah had done, but he did not enter the Temple of the L ORD ; however, the people still acted corruptly.
It was he who built the Upper Gate of the House of the L ORD ; he also built extensively on the wall of Ophel.
He built towns in the hill country of Judah, and in the woods he built fortresses and towers.
Moreover, he fought with the king of the Ammonites and overcame them; the Ammonites gave him that year 100 talents of silver and 10,000 kor of wheat and another 10,000 of barley; that is what the Ammonites paid him, and [likewise] in the second and third years.
Jotham was strong because he maintained a faithful course before the L ORD his God.
The other events of Jotham’s reign, and all his battles and his conduct, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.
He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.
Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David; his son Ahaz succeeded him as king.

Chapter 28

Ahaz was twenty years old when he became king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. He did not do what was pleasing to the L ORD as his father David had done,
but followed the ways of the kings of Israel; he even made molten images for the Baals.
He made offerings in the Valley of Ben-hinnom and burned his sons in fire, in the abhorrent fashion of the nations which the L ORD had dispossessed before the Israelites.
He sacrificed and made offerings at the shrines, on the hills, and under every leafy tree.
The L ORD his God delivered him over to the king of Aram, who defeated him and took many of his men captive, and brought them to Damascus. He was also delivered over to the king of Israel, who inflicted a great defeat on him.
Pekah son of Remaliah killed 120,000 in Judah—all brave men—in one day, because they had forsaken the L ORD God of their fathers.
Zichri, the champion of Ephraim, killed Maaseiah the king’s son, and Azrikam chief of the palace, and Elkanah, the second to the king.
The Israelites captured 200,000 of their kinsmen, women, boys, and girls; they also took a large amount of booty from them and brought the booty to Samaria.

A prophet of the L ORD by the name of Oded was there, who went out to meet the army on its return to Samaria. He said to them, “Because of the fury of the L ORD God of your fathers against Judah, He delivered them over to you, and you killed them in a rage that reached heaven.
Do you now intend to subjugate the men and women of Judah and Jerusalem to be your slaves? As it is, you have nothing but offenses against the L ORD your God.
Now then, listen to me, and send back the captives you have taken from your kinsmen, for the wrath of the L ORD is upon you!”
Some of the chief men of the Ephraimites—Azariah son of Jehohanan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai—confronted those returning from the campaign
and said to them, “Do not bring these captives here, for it would mean our offending the L ORD, adding to our sins and our offenses; for our offense is grave enough, and there is already wrath upon Israel.”
So the soldiers released the captives and the booty in the presence of the officers and all the congregation.
Then the men named above proceeded to take the captives in hand, and with the booty they clothed all the naked among them—they clothed them and shod them and gave them to eat and drink and anointed them and provided donkeys for all who were failing and brought them to Jericho, the city of palms, back to their kinsmen. Then they returned to Samaria.
At that time, King Ahaz sent to the king of Assyria for help.
Again the Edomites came and inflicted a defeat on Judah and took captives.
And the Philistines made forays against the cities of the Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah; they seized Beth-shemesh and Aijalon and Gederoth, and Soco with its villages, and Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they settled there.
Thus the L ORD brought Judah low on account of King Ahaz of Israel, a Some mss. and ancient versions read “Judah.” for he threw off restraint in Judah and trespassed against the L ORD.
Tillegath-pilneser, king of Assyria, marched against him and gave him trouble, instead of supporting him.
For Ahaz plundered the House of the L ORD and the house of the king and the officers, and made a gift to the king of Assyria—to no avail.
In his time of trouble, this King Ahaz trespassed even more against the L ORD,
sacrificing to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, for he thought, “The gods of the kings of Aram help them; I shall sacrifice to them and they will help me”; but they were his ruin and that of all Israel.
Ahaz collected the utensils of the House of God, and cut the utensils of the House of God to pieces. He shut the doors of the House of the L ORD and made himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem.
In every town in Judah he set up shrines to make offerings to other gods, vexing the L ORD God of his fathers.
The other events of his reign and all his conduct, early and late, are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.
Ahaz slept with his fathers and was buried in the city, in Jerusalem; his body was not brought to the tombs of the kings of Israel. His son Hezekiah succeeded him as king.

Chapter 29

Hezekiah became king at the age of twenty-five, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem; his mother’s name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah.
He did what was pleasing to the L ORD, just as his father David had done.

He, in the first month of the first year of his reign, opened the doors of the House of the L ORD and repaired them.
He summoned the priests and the Levites and assembled them in the east square.
He said to them, “Listen to me, Levites! Sanctify yourselves and sanctify the House of the L ORD God of your fathers, and take the abhorrent things out of the holy place.
For our fathers trespassed and did what displeased the L ORD our God; they forsook Him and turned their faces away from the dwelling-place of the L ORD, turning their backs on it.
They also shut the doors of the porch and put out the lights; they did not offer incense and did not make burnt offerings in the holy place to the God of Israel.
The wrath of the L ORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem; He made them an object of horror, amazement, and hissing a See note at Jer. 18.16. as you see with your own eyes.
Our fathers died by the sword, and our sons and daughters and wives are in captivity on account of this.
Now I wish to make a covenant with the L ORD God of Israel, so that His rage may be withdrawn from us.
Now, my sons, do not be slack, for the L ORD chose you to attend upon Him, to serve Him, to be His ministers and to make offerings to Him.”
So the Levites set to—Mahath son of Amasai and Joel son of Azariah of the sons of Kohath; and of the sons of Merari, Kish son of Abdi and Azariah son of Jehallelel; and of the Gershonites, Joah son of Zimmah and Eden son of Joah;
and of the sons of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; and of the sons of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah;
and of the sons of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei; and of the sons of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel—
and, gathering their brothers, they sanctified themselves and came, by a command of the king concerning the L ORD ’s ordinances, to purify the House of the L ORD.
The priests went into the House of the L ORD to purify it, and brought all the unclean things they found in the Temple of the L ORD out into the court of the House of the L ORD ; [there] the Levites received them, to take them outside to Wadi Kidron.
They began the sanctification on the first day of the first month; on the eighth day of the month they reached the porch of the L ORD. They sanctified the House of the L ORD for eight days, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished.
Then they went into the palace of King Hezekiah and said, “We have purified the whole House of the L ORD and the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the table of the bread of display and all its utensils;
and all the utensils that King Ahaz had befouled during his reign, when he trespassed, we have made ready and sanctified. They are standing in front of the altar of the L ORD.”
King Hezekiah rose early, gathered the officers of the city, and went up to the House of the L ORD.
They brought seven bulls and seven rams and seven lambs and seven he-goats as a sin offering for the kingdom and for the Sanctuary and for Judah. He ordered the Aaronite priests to offer them on the altar of the L ORD.
The cattle were slaughtered, and the priests received the blood and dashed it against the altar; the rams were slaughtered and the blood was dashed against the altar; the lambs were slaughtered and the blood was dashed against the altar.
The he-goats for the sin offering were presented to the king and the congregation, who laid their hands upon them.

The priests slaughtered them and performed the purgation rite with the blood against the altar, to expiate for all Israel, for the king had designated the burnt offering and the sin offering to be for all Israel.
He stationed the Levites in the House of the L ORD with cymbals and harps and lyres, as David and Gad the king's seer and Nathan the prophet had ordained, for the ordinance was by the L ORD through His prophets.
When the Levites were in place with the instruments of David, and the priests with their trumpets,
Hezekiah gave the order to offer the burnt offering on the altar. When the burnt offering began, the song of the L ORD and the trumpets began also, together with the instruments of King David of Israel.
All the congregation prostrated themselves, the song was sung and the trumpets were blown—all this until the end of the burnt offering.
When the offering was finished, the king and all who were there with him knelt and prostrated themselves.
King Hezekiah and the officers ordered the Levites to praise the L ORD in the words of David and Asaph the seer; so they praised rapturously, and they bowed and prostrated themselves.
Then Hezekiah said, "Now you have consecrated yourselves to the L ORD ; come, bring sacrifices of well-being and thanksgiving to the House of the L ORD." The congregation brought sacrifices of well-being and thanksgiving, and all who felt so moved brought burnt offerings.
The number of burnt offerings that the congregation brought was 70 cattle, 100 rams, 200 lambs—all these for burnt offerings to the L ORD.
The sacred offerings were 600 large cattle and 3,000 small cattle.
The priests were too few to be able to flay all the burnt offerings, so their kinsmen, the Levites, reinforced them till the end of the work, and till the [rest of the] priests sanctified themselves. (The Levites were more conscientious about sanctifying themselves than the priests.)
For beside the large number of burnt offerings, there were the fat parts of the sacrifices of well-being and the libations for the burnt offerings; so the service of the House of the L ORD was properly accomplished.
Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced over what God had enabled the people to accomplish, because it had happened so suddenly.

Chapter 30

Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah; he also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh to come to the House of the L ORD in Jerusalem to keep the Passover for the L ORD God of Israel.
The king and his officers and the congregation in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second month,
for at the time, they were unable to keep it, a I.e., on its proper date; cf. Num. 9.1–14. for not enough priests had sanctified themselves, nor had the people assembled in Jerusalem.
The king and the whole congregation thought it proper
to issue a decree and proclaim throughout all Israel from Beer-sheba to Dan that they come and keep the Passover for the L ORD God of Israel in Jerusalem—not often did they act in accord with what was written.
The couriers went out with the letters from the king and his officers through all Israel and Judah, by order of the king, proclaiming, "O you Israelites! Return to the L ORD God of your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and He will return to the remnant of you who escaped from the hand of the kings of Assyria.
Do not be like your fathers and brothers who trespassed against the L ORD God of their fathers and He turned them into a horror, as you see.
Now do not be stiffnecked like your fathers; submit yourselves to the L ORD and come to His sanctuary, which He consecrated forever, and serve the L ORD your God so that His anger may turn back from you.

If you return to the L ORD, your brothers and children will be regarded with compassion by their captors, and will return to this land; for the L ORD your God is gracious and merciful; He will not turn His face from you if you return to Him.”
As the couriers passed from town to town in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh till they reached Zebulun, they were laughed at and mocked.
Some of the people of Asher and Manasseh and Zebulun, however, were contrite, and came to Jerusalem.
The hand of God was on Judah, too, making them of a single mind to carry out the command of the king and officers concerning the ordinance of the L ORD.
A great crowd assembled at Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month, a very great congregation.
They set to and removed the altars that were in Jerusalem, and they removed all the incense stands and threw them into Wadi Kidron.
They slaughtered the paschal sacrifice on the fourteenth of the second month. The priests and Levites were ashamed, and they sanctified themselves and brought burnt offerings to the House of the L ORD.
They took their stations, as was their rule according to the Teaching of Moses, man of God. The priests dashed the blood [which they received] from the Levites.
Since many in the congregation had not sanctified themselves, the Levites were in charge of slaughtering the paschal sacrifice for everyone who was not clean, so as to consecrate them to the L ORD.
For most of the people—many from Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun—had not purified themselves, yet they ate the paschal sacrifice in violation of what was written. Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, “The good L ORD will provide atonement for
everyone who set his mind on worshiping God, the L ORD God of his fathers, even if he is not purified for the sanctuary.”
The L ORD heard Hezekiah and healed the people.
The Israelites who were in Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days, with great rejoicing, the Levites and the priests praising the L ORD daily with powerful instruments for the L ORD.
Hezekiah persuaded all the Levites who performed skillfully for the L ORD to spend the seven days of the festival making offerings of well-being, and confessing to the L ORD God of their fathers.
All the congregation resolved to keep seven more days, so they kept seven more days of rejoicing.
King Hezekiah of Judah contributed to the congregation 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep. And the officers contributed to the congregation 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep. And the priests sanctified themselves in large numbers.
All the congregation of Judah and the priests and the Levites and all the congregation that came from Israel, and the resident aliens who came from the land of Israel and who lived in Judah, rejoiced.
There was great rejoicing in Jerusalem, for since the time of King Solomon son of David of Israel nothing like it had happened in Jerusalem.
The Levite priests rose and blessed the people, and their voice was heard, and their prayer went up to His holy abode, to heaven.

Chapter 31

When all this was finished, all Israel who were present went out into the towns of Judah and smashed the pillars, cut down the sacred posts, demolished the shrines and altars throughout Judah and Benjamin, and throughout Ephraim and Manasseh, to the very last one. Then all the Israelites returned to their towns, each to his possession.
Hezekiah reconstituted the divisions of the priests and Levites, each man of the priests and Levites according to his office, for the burnt

offerings, the offerings of well-being, to minister, and to sing hymns and praises in the gates of the courts of the L ORD ;
also the king’s portion, from his property, for the burnt offerings—the morning and evening burnt offering, and the burnt offerings for sabbaths, and new moons, and festivals, as prescribed in the Teaching of the L ORD.
He ordered the people, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to deliver the portions of the priests and the Levites, so that they might devote themselves to the Teaching of the L ORD.
When the word spread, the Israelites brought large quantities of grain, wine, oil, honey, and all kinds of agricultural produce, and tithes of all, in large amounts.
The men of Israel and Judah living in the towns of Judah—they too brought tithes of cattle and sheep and tithes of sacred things consecrated to the L ORD their God, piling them in heaps.
In the third month the heaps began to accumulate, and were finished in the seventh month.
When Hezekiah and the officers came and saw the heaps, they blessed the L ORD and his people Israel.
Hezekiah asked the priests and Levites about the heaps.
The chief priest Azariah, of the house of Zadok, replied to him, saying, “Ever since the gifts began to be brought to the House of the L ORD, people have been eating to satiety and leaving over in great amounts, for the L ORD has blessed His people; this huge amount is left over!”
Hezekiah then gave orders to prepare store-chambers in the House of the L ORD ; and they were prepared.
They brought in the gifts and the tithes and the sacred things faithfully. Their supervisor was Conaniah the Levite, and Shimei his brother was second in rank.
Jehiel and Azaziah and Nahath and Asahel and Jerimoth and Jozabad and Eliel and Ismachiah and Mahath and Benaiah were commissioners under Conaniah and Shimei his brother by appointment of King Hezekiah; Azariah was supervisor of the House of God.
Kore son of Imnah the Levite, the keeper of the East Gate, was in charge of the freewill offerings to God, of the allocation of gifts to the L ORD, and the most sacred things.
Under him were Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in offices of trust in the priestly towns, making allocation to their brothers by divisions, to great and small alike;
besides allocating their daily rations to those males registered by families from three years old and up, all who entered the House of the L ORD according to their service and their shift by division;
and in charge of the registry of priests by clans, and of the Levites, from twenty years old and up, by shifts, in their divisions;
and the registry of the dependents of their whole company—wives, sons, and daughters—for, relying upon them, they sanctified themselves in holiness.
And for the Aaronite priests, in each and every one of their towns with adjoining fields, the above-named men were to allocate portions to every male of the priests and to every registered Levite.
Hezekiah did this throughout Judah. He acted in a way that was good, upright, and faithful before the L ORD his God.
Every work he undertook in the service of the House of God or in the Teaching and the Commandment, to worship his God, he did with all his heart; and he prospered.

Chapter 32

a Cf. 2 Kings 18–20; Isa. 36–39. After these faithful deeds, King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah and encamped against its fortified towns with the aim of taking them over.

When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come, intent on making war against Jerusalem,
he consulted with his officers and warriors about stopping the flow of the springs outside the city, and they supported him.
A large force was assembled to stop up all the springs and the wadi that flowed through the land, for otherwise, they thought, the king of Assyria would come and find water in abundance.
He acted with vigor, rebuilding the whole breached wall, raising towers on it, and building another wall outside it. He fortified the Millo of the City of David, and made a great quantity of arms and shields.
He appointed battle officers over the people; then, gathering them to him in the square of the city gate, he rallied them, saying,
"Be strong and of good courage; do not be frightened or dismayed by the king of Assyria or by the horde that is with him, for we have more with us than he has with him.
With him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the L ORD our God, to help us and to fight our battles." The people were encouraged by the speech of King Hezekiah of Judah.
Afterward, King Sennacherib of Assyria sent his officers to Jerusalem—he and all his staff being at Lachish—with this message to King Hezekiah of Judah and to all the people of Judah who were in Jerusalem:
"Thus said King Sennacherib of Assyria: On what do you trust to enable you to endure a siege in Jerusalem?
Hezekiah is seducing you to a death of hunger and thirst, saying, 'The L ORD our God will save us from the king of Assyria.'
But is not Hezekiah the one who removed His shrines and His altars and commanded the people of Judah and Jerusalem saying, 'Before this one altar you shall prostrate yourselves, and upon it make your burnt offerings'?
Surely you know what I and my fathers have done to the peoples of the lands? Were the gods of the nations of the lands able to save their lands from me?
Which of all the gods of any of those nations whom my fathers destroyed was able to save his people from me, that your God should be able to save you from me?
Now then, do not let Hezekiah delude you; do not let him seduce you in this way; do not believe him. For no god of any nation or kingdom has been able to save his people from me or from my fathers—much less your God, to save you from me!"
His officers said still more things against the L ORD God and against His servant Hezekiah.
He also wrote letters reviling the L ORD God of Israel, saying of Him, "Just as the gods of the other nations of the earth did not save their people from me, so the God of Hezekiah will not save his people from me."
They called loudly in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten them into panic, so as to capture the city.
They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as though He were like the gods of the other peoples of the earth, made by human hands.
Then King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz prayed about this, and cried out to heaven.
The L ORD sent an angel who annihilated every mighty warrior, commander, and officer in the army of the king of Assyria, and he returned in disgrace to his land. He entered the house of his god, and there some of his own offspring struck him down by the sword.
Thus the L ORD delivered Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from King Sennacherib of Assyria, and from everyone; He provided for them on all sides.

Many brought tribute to the L ORD to Jerusalem, and gifts to King Hezekiah of Judah; thereafter he was exalted in the eyes of all the nations.
At that time, Hezekiah fell deathly sick. He prayed to the L ORD, who responded to him and gave him a sign.
Hezekiah made no return for what had been bestowed upon him, for he grew arrogant; so wrath was decreed for him and for Judah and Jerusalem.
Then Hezekiah humbled himself where he had been arrogant, he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and no wrath of the L ORD came on them during the reign of Hezekiah.
Hezekiah enjoyed riches and glory in abundance; he filled treasuries with silver and gold, precious stones, spices, shields, and all lovely objects;
and store-cities with the produce of grain, wine, and oil, and stalls for all kinds of beasts, and flocks for sheepfolds.
And he acquired towns, and flocks of small and large cattle in great number, for God endowed him with very many possessions.
It was Hezekiah who stopped up the spring of water of Upper Gihon, leading it downward west of the City of David; Hezekiah prospered in all that he did.
So too in the matter of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who were sent to him to inquire about the sign that was in the land, when God forsook him in order to test him, to learn all that was in his mind.
The other events of Hezekiah’s reign, and his faithful acts, are recorded in the visions of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz and in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.
Hezekiah slept with his fathers, and was buried on the upper part of the tombs of the sons of David. When he died, all the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem accorded him much honor. Manasseh, his son, succeeded him.

Chapter 33

a Cf. 2 Kings 21. Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.
He did what was displeasing to the L ORD, following the abhorrent practices of the nations that the L ORD had dispossessed before the Israelites.
He rebuilt the shrines that his father Hezekiah had demolished; he erected altars for the Baals and made sacred posts. He bowed down to all the host of heaven and worshiped them,
and he built altars [to them] in the House of the L ORD, of which the L ORD had said, “My name will be in Jerusalem forever.”
He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the House of the L ORD.
He consigned his sons to the fire in the Valley of Ben-hinnom, and he practiced soothsaying, divination, and sorcery, and consulted ghosts and familiar spirits; he did much that was displeasing to the L ORD in order to vex Him.
He placed a sculptured image that he made in the House of God, of which God had said to David and to his son Solomon, “In this House and in Jerusalem, which I chose out of all the tribes of Israel, I will establish My name forever.
And I will never again remove the feet of Israel from the land that I assigned to their fathers, if only they observe faithfully all that I have commanded them—all the teaching and the laws and the rules given by Moses.”
Manasseh led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray into evil greater than that done by the nations that the L ORD had destroyed before the Israelites.

The L ORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not pay heed, so the L ORD brought against them the officers of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh captive in manacles, bound him in fetters, and led him off to Babylon.
In his distress, he entreated the L ORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers.
He prayed to Him, and He granted his prayer, heard his plea, and returned him to Jerusalem to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the L ORD alone was God.
Afterward he built the outer wall of the City of David west of Gihon in the wadi on the way to the Fish Gate, and it encircled Ophel; he raised it very high. He also placed army officers in all the fortified towns of Judah.
He removed the foreign gods and the image from the House of the L ORD, as well as all the altars that he had built on the Mount of the House of the L ORD and in Jerusalem, and dumped them outside the city.
He rebuilt the altar of the L ORD and offered on it sacrifices of well-being and thanksgiving, and commanded the people of Judah to worship the L ORD God of Israel.
To be sure, the people continued sacrificing at the shrines, but only to the L ORD their God.
The other events of Manasseh’s reign, and his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the L ORD God of Israel are found in the chronicles of the kings of Israel.
His prayer and how it was granted to him, the whole account of his sin and trespass, and the places in which he built shrines and installed sacred posts and images before he humbled himself are recorded in the words of Hozai. b Or “seers.”
Manasseh slept with his fathers and was buried on his palace grounds; his son Amon succeeded him as king.
Amon was twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem.
He did what was displeasing to the L ORD, as his father Manasseh had done. Amon sacrificed to all the idols that his father Manasseh had made and worshiped them.
He did not humble himself before the L ORD, as his father Manasseh had humbled himself; instead, Amon incurred much guilt.
His courtiers conspired against him and killed him in his palace.
But the people of the land struck down all who had conspired against King Amon; and the people of the land made his son Josiah king in his stead.

Chapter 34

a Cf. 2 Kings 22; 23.1–20. Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem.
He did what was pleasing to the L ORD, following the ways of his father David without deviating to the right or to the left.
In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David, and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the shrines, the sacred posts, the idols, and the molten images.
At his bidding, they demolished the altars of the Baals, and he had the incense stands above them cut down; he smashed the sacred posts, the idols, and the images, ground them into dust, and strewed it onto the graves of those who had sacrificed to them.
He burned the bones of priests on their altars and purged Judah and Jerusalem.
In the towns of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simeon, as far as Naphtali, [lying] in ruins on every side,

he demolished the altars and the sacred posts and smashed the idols and ground them into dust; and he hewed down all the incense stands throughout the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.
In the eighteenth year of his reign, after purging the land and the House, he commissioned Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of the city, and Joah son of Joahaz the recorder to repair the House of the L ORD his God.
They came to the high priest Hilkiah and delivered to him the silver brought to the House of God, which the Levites, the guards of the threshold, had collected from Manasseh and Ephraim and from all the remnant of Israel and from all Judah and Benjamin and b With kethib and ancient versions; qere, "they returned to Jerusalem." the inhabitants of Jerusalem. -b
They delivered it into the custody of the overseers who were in charge at the House of the L ORD, and the overseers who worked in the House of the L ORD spent it on examining and repairing the House.
They paid it out to the artisans and the masons to buy quarried stone and wood for the couplings and for making roof-beams for the buildings that the kings of Judah had allowed to fall into ruin.
The men did the work honestly; over them were appointed the Levites Jahath and Obadiah, of the sons of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, of the sons of Kohath, to supervise; while other Levites, all the master musicians,
were over the porters, supervising all who worked at each and every task; some of the Levites were scribes and officials and gatekeepers.
As they took out the silver that had been brought to the House of the L ORD, the priest Hilkiah found a scroll of the L ORD 's Teaching given by Moses.
Hilkiah spoke up and said to the scribe Shaphan, "I have found a scroll of the Teaching in the House of the L ORD "; and Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan.
Shaphan brought the scroll to the king and also reported to the king, "All that was entrusted to your servants is being done;
they have melted down the silver that was found in the House of the L ORD and delivered it to those who were in charge, to the overseers."
The scribe Shaphan also told the king, "The priest Hilkiah has given me a scroll"; and Shaphan read from it to the king.
When the king heard the words of the Teaching, he tore his clothes.
The king gave orders to Hilkiah, and Ahikam son of Shaphan, and Abdon son of Micah, and the scribe Shaphan, and Asaiah the king's minister, saying,
"Go, inquire of the L ORD on my behalf and on behalf of those who remain in Israel and Judah concerning the words of the scroll that has been found, for great indeed must be the wrath of the L ORD that has been poured down upon us because our fathers did not obey the word of the L ORD and do all that is written in this scroll."
Hilkiah and those whom the king [had ordered] went to the prophetess Huldah, wife of Shallum son of Tokhath son of Hasrah, keeper of the wardrobe, who was living in Jerusalem in the Mishneh, c A quarter in Jerusalem; cf. Zeph. 1.10. and spoke to her accordingly.
She responded to them: "Thus said the L ORD God of Israel: Say to the man who sent you to Me,
'Thus said the L ORD : I am going to bring disaster upon this place and its inhabitants—all the curses that are written in the scroll that was read to the king of Judah—
because they forsook Me and made offerings to other gods in order to vex Me with all the works of their hands; My wrath shall be poured out against this place and not be quenched.'
But say this to the king of Judah who sent you to inquire of the L ORD : 'Thus said the L ORD God of Israel: As for the words which you have heard,

since your heart was softened and you humbled yourself before God when you heard His words concerning this place and its inhabitants, and you humbled yourself before Me and tore your clothes and wept before Me, I for My part have listened, declares the L ORD.
Assuredly, I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be laid in your grave in peace; your eyes shall see nothing of the disaster that I will bring upon this place and its inhabitants.’” They reported this back to the king.
Then the king sent word and assembled all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem.
The king went up to the House of the L ORD with all the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the priests and the Levites—all the people, young and old—and he read to them the entire text of the covenant scroll that was found in the House of the L ORD.
The king stood in his place and solemnized the covenant before the L ORD : to follow the L ORD and observe His commandments, His injunctions, and His laws with all his heart and soul, to fulfill all the terms of the covenant written in this scroll.
He obligated all the men of Jerusalem and Benjamin who were present; and the inhabitants of Jerusalem acted in accord with the Covenant of God, God of their fathers.
Josiah removed all the abominations from the whole territory of the Israelites and obliged all who were in Israel to worship the L ORD their God. Throughout his reign they did not deviate from following the L ORD God of their fathers.

Chapter 35

a Cf. 2 Kings 23.21–30. Josiah kept the Passover for the L ORD in Jerusalem; the passover sacrifice was slaughtered on the fourteenth day of the first month.
He reinstated the priests in their shifts and rallied them to the service of the House of the L ORD.
He said to the Levites, consecrated to the L ORD, who taught all Israel, “Put the Holy Ark in the House that Solomon son of David, king of Israel, built; as you no longer carry it on your shoulders, see now to the service of the L ORD your God and His people Israel,
and dispose yourselves by clans according to your divisions, as prescribed in the writing of King David of Israel and in the document of his son Solomon,
and attend in the Sanctuary, by clan divisions, on your kinsmen, the people—by clan divisions of the Levites.
Having sanctified yourselves, slaughter the passover sacrifice and prepare it for your kinsmen, according to the word of God given by Moses.”
Josiah donated to the people small cattle—lambs and goats, all for passover sacrifices for all present—to the sum of 30,000, and large cattle, 3,000—these from the property of the king.
His officers gave a freewill offering to the people, to the priests, and to the Levites. Hilkiah and Zechariah and Jehiel, the chiefs of the House of God, donated to the priests for passover sacrifices 2,600 [small cattle] and 300 large cattle.
Conaniah, Shemaiah, and Nethanel, his brothers, and Hashabiah and Jeiel and Jozabad, officers of the Levites, donated 5,000 [small cattle] and 500 large cattle to the Levites for passover sacrifices.
The service was arranged well: the priests stood at their posts and the Levites in their divisions, by the king’s command.
They slaughtered the passover sacrifice and the priests [received its blood] from them and dashed it, while the Levites flayed the animals.

They removed the parts to be burnt, distributing them to divisions of the people by clans, and making the sacrifices to the L ORD, as prescribed in the scroll of Moses; they did the same for the cattle.
They roasted the passover sacrifice in fire, as prescribed, while the sacred offerings they cooked in pots, cauldrons, and pans, and conveyed them with dispatch to all the people.
Afterward they provided for themselves and the priests, for the Aaronite priests were busy offering the burnt offerings and the fatty parts until nightfall, so the Levites provided both for themselves and for the Aaronite priests.
The Asaphite singers were at their stations, by command of David and Asaph and Heman and Jeduthun, the seer of the king; and the gatekeepers were at each and every gate. They did not have to leave their tasks, because their Levite brothers provided for them.
The entire service of the L ORD was arranged well that day, to keep the Passover and to make the burnt offerings on the altar of the L ORD, according to the command of King Josiah.
All the Israelites present kept the Passover at that time, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days.
Since the time of the prophet Samuel, no Passover like that one had ever been kept in Israel; none of the kings of Israel had kept a Passover like the one kept by Josiah and the priests and the Levites and all Judah and Israel there present and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.
That Passover was kept in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah.
After all this furbishing of the Temple by Josiah, King Necho of Egypt came up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him.
[Necho] sent messengers to him, saying, “What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I do not march against you this day but against the kingdom that wars with me, and it is God’s will that I hurry. Refrain, then, from interfering with God who is with me, that He not destroy you.”
But Josiah would not let him alone; instead, b With Targum. he donned [his armor] -b to fight him, heedless of Necho’s words from the mouth of God; and he came to fight in the plain of Megiddo.
Archers shot King Josiah, and the king said to his servants, “Get me away from here, for I am badly wounded.”
His servants carried him out of his chariot and put him in the wagon of his second-in-command, and conveyed him to Jerusalem. There he died, and was buried in the grave of his fathers, and all Judah and Jerusalem went into mourning over Josiah.
Jeremiah composed laments for Josiah which all the singers, male and female, recited in their laments for Josiah, as is done to this day; they became customary in Israel and were incorporated into the laments.
The other events of Josiah’s reign and his faithful deeds, in accord with the Teaching of the L ORD,
and his acts, early and late, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.

Chapter 36

a With vv. 1–13, cf. 2 Kings 23.28–37; 24.1–20. The people of the land took Jehoahaz son of Josiah and made him king instead of his father in Jerusalem.
Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he became king and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.
The king of Egypt deposed him in Jerusalem and laid a fine on the land of 100 silver talents and one gold talent.
The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim; Necho took his brother Joahaz and brought him to Egypt.

Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; he did what was displeasing to the L ORD his God.
King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon marched against him; he bound him in fetters to convey him to Babylon.
Nebuchadnezzar also brought some vessels of the House of the L ORD to Babylon, and set them in his palace in Babylon.
The other events of Jehoiakim's reign, and the abominable things he did, and what was found against him, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah. His son Jehoiachin succeeded him as king.
Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem; he did what was displeasing to the L ORD.
At the turn of the year, King Nebuchadnezzar sent to have him brought to Babylon with the precious vessels of the House of the L ORD, and he made his kinsman Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.
Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.
He did what was displeasing to the L ORD his God; he did not humble himself before the prophet Jeremiah, who spoke for the L ORD.
He also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who made him take an oath b Viz., a vassal oath. by God; he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart so as not to turn to the L ORD God of Israel.
All the officers of the priests and the people committed many trespasses, following all the abominable practices of the nations. They polluted the House of the L ORD, which He had consecrated in Jerusalem.
The L ORD God of their fathers had sent word to them through His messengers daily without fail, for He had pity on His people and His dwelling-place.
But they mocked the messengers of God and disdained His words and taunted His prophets until the wrath of the L ORD against His people grew beyond remedy.
He therefore brought the king of the Chaldeans upon them, who killed their youths by the sword in their sanctuary; He did not spare youth, maiden, elder, or graybeard, but delivered all into his hands.
All the vessels of the House of God, large and small, and the treasures of the House of the L ORD and the treasures of the king and his officers were all brought to Babylon.
They burned the House of God and tore down the wall of Jerusalem, burned down all its mansions, and consigned all its precious objects to destruction.
Those who survived the sword he exiled to Babylon, and they became his and his sons' servants till the rise of the Persian kingdom,
in fulfillment of the word of the L ORD spoken by Jeremiah, until the land paid back its sabbaths; as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, till seventy years were completed.
And in the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, when the word of the L ORD spoken by Jeremiah was fulfilled, the L ORD roused the spirit of King Cyrus of Persia to issue a proclamation throughout his realm by word of mouth and in writing, as follows:
"Thus said King Cyrus of Persia: The L ORD God of Heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and has charged me with building Him a House in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Any one of you of all His people, the L ORD his God be with him and let him go up."